

To: Susan Dunlap[Susan.Dunlap@mtstandard.com]
Cc: Moler, Robert[Moler.Robert@epa.gov]; Greene, Nikia[Greene.Nikia@epa.gov]
From: Vranka, Joe
Sent: Fri 12/15/2017 12:00:27 AM
Subject: RE: clarification on Wed night council meeting

Hi, Susan:

Please see my responses below in red text.

Thank you,

Joe

From: Susan Dunlap [mailto:Susan.Dunlap@mtstandard.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2017 1:38 PM
To: Vranka, Joe <vranka.joe@epa.gov>
Cc: Moler, Robert <Moler.Robert@epa.gov>; Greene, Nikia <Greene.Nikia@epa.gov>
Subject: clarification on Wed night council meeting

Hi Joe,

I am seeking some clarification from last night's meeting. You said West Side Soils won't include the Flat because the data for the Flat shows action levels are below standards set for Butte. But I've been reporting since September that West Side Soils includes the Flat and EPA has never asked for a correction nor ever tried to refute that.

Can you explain why?

EPA appreciates the opportunity to correct this misunderstanding by presenting accurate information to you and the Council. Homes in the area of the Flats have been sampled for arsenic in attics and remediated where necessary.

Further, you said last night that the remedial investigation is getting ready to start next year. In a list of interview questions I sent in October on West Side Soils, EPA said the following in response to a question I posed about sampling Blacktail Creek east of Lexington Ave. for West Side Soils: The RI workplan will identify what areas will be sampled and **may include areas east of Lexington**. The draft RI workplan will be finalized prior to the RI.

EPA was looking at areas east of Lexington but, after reviewing the data, we did not find reason to include areas east of Lexington at this time.

Also, correct me if I'm wrong, but it was my understanding from talking to you last night that for West Side Soils EPA is only looking at soil – not at surface or groundwater? If that is true, EPA said in response to my October query: The RI is likely to include soil, groundwater, and surface water sampling. Can you clarify?

EPA will be implementing a comprehensive remedial investigation that will include soil, groundwater and surface water.

Did I hear you correctly as saying that EPA has known people are out there in West Side Soils riding their dirt bikes? EPA believes that some recreational use occurs within the West Side Soils operable unit based on anecdotal reports of bikes, motorcycles, shooting practice. Most of these instances are likely trespassers on private property.

Did I get this correct: "There are waste piles in West Side Soils that exceed recreational levels." What are the recreational levels for lead and arsenic in Butte? Data provided from previous sampling events show some waste piles in the West Side Soils area exceed the recreational cleanup level for the Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit, 2,300 mg/kg for lead and 1,000 mg/kg for arsenic.

You said EPA has been trying for the last few years to address West Side Soils but due to the hiring freeze and administration change it's been put off. But the hiring freeze and administration change all happened in 2017. Was there a hiring freeze prior to 2017? EPA has had a remedial investigation scheduled to begin for the West Side Soils Operable Unit for the past few years. Various reasons have necessitated pushing back the schedule, including consent decree negotiations on Butte Priority Soils and other priorities for cleanup at the site. The hiring freeze resulted in pushing the schedule from fiscal year 2017 to 2018 to allow EPA more time to evaluate workload adjustments.

Why didn't EPA address West Side Soils earlier than a few years ago? As indicated at the meeting last night, other areas of the Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area Superfund site have been a higher priority than the West Side Soils Operable Unit because of higher concentrations of contaminants in wastes, closer proximity of wastes to human and environmental receptors, greater risk of human exposure to wastes, active discharges of contaminants into streams, and other factors. The waste piles in the West Side Soils Operable Unit are located in areas with less use, farther from streams, and not in proximity to residences or other areas with frequent human exposure.

Also, after your presentation, one of the commissioners said someone from Denver EPA is coming to address the council in Jan. on West Side Soils. Can you all confirm this? EPA would like to follow up with the Council meeting last night with a visit from our Regional leadership. Nothing has been scheduled at this time.

Deadline end of day.

Thanks,

Susan

Susan Dunlap

Natural Resources Reporter

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